

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
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O 311535Z JAN 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 021024

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SEDU, SA

SUBJECT: SAG REQUESTS FORD FOUNDATION TO WITHDRAW FROM
SAUDIA ARABIA

1. SUMMARY: MCGEORGE BUNDY HAS TOLD ASSISTANT SECRETARY
ATHERTON THAT FORD FOUNDATION HAS RECEIVED WORD THAT SAG
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR HAS ACCUSED FOUNDATION OF BEING
"ZIONIST ORGANIZATION" AND HAS DEMANDED THAT IT TERMINATE
ITS ACTIVITIES IN KINGDOM WITHIN ONE WEEK. SAM BUNKER,
FORD REP IN CAIRO, HOPES TO ARRIVE IN KINGDOM ON TUESDAY
TO DISCUSS MATTER WITH EMBASSY AND WITH SAG AUTHORITIES.
END SUMMARY.

2. BUNDY OF FORD FOUNDATION HAS ALERTED ASSISTANT SECRE-
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TARY ATHERTON TO SAG NOTICE TO TERMINATE FOUNDATION'S
PRESENCE IN KINGDOM. FROM OTHER FOUNDATION OFFICIAL WE
HAVE OBTAINED DETAILS WHICH FOLLOW.

3. LAST AMERICAN EMPLOYED BY FORD FOUNDATION IN SAUDI
ARABIA COMPLETED MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PROJECT IN RIYADH
IN JULY 1976 AND DEPARTED, PLACING FOUNDATION FILES IN

LEASED APARTMENT. FOUNDATION CONTINUED TO EMPLOY HOUSEBOY, DRIVER, AND PART-TIME SECRETARY. ON JANUARY 22, SECRETARY (REGULARLY EMPLOYED BY WORLD BANK OFFICE) WAS VISITED BY

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR MESSENGER WHO READ LETTER STATING THAT FORD FOUNDATION WAS A ZIONIST ORGANIZATION AND WOULD HAVE TO TERMINATE ALL ACTIVITIES WITHIN KINGDOM WITHIN WEEK. MESSENGER REFUSED TO LEAVE LETTER, BUT TOLD SECRETARY FOUNDATION OFFICIALS WOULD HAVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE "RECEIPT". SECRETARY CABLED NEWS TO SAM BUNKER, FOUNDATION REP IN CAIRO.

4. ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, FOUNDATION EGYPTIAN ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT FROM CAIRO PRESENTED LETTER ASKING FOR MORE DETAILS TO LOW LEVEL MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OFFICIAL, AND REQUESTED EXTENSION OF DEADLINE BY ONE MONTH. MINISTRY OFFICIAL GRANTED TEN DAY EXTENSION (UNTIL APPROXIMATELY FEBRUARY 4). ASSISTANT LEARNED THAT WITHIN RECENT PAST COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAD CIRCULARIZED ALL SAG MINISTRIES ASKING FOR INFORMATION ON WAYS IN WHICH FOUNDATION WAS PROVIDING ASSISTANCE. SINCE MIN ED PROJECT WAS LAST ON-GOING PROJECT, REPLIES SHOWED NO SIGNIFICANT WORK UNDER WAY.

5. BUNKER HAS APPLIED FOR VISA IN CAIRO AND HOPES TO COME TO JIDDA ON TUESDAY FOR TALKS WITH EMBASSY AND SAG OFFICIALS TO SEE WHAT LIES BEHIND THESE DEVELOPMENTS. FOUNDATION DOES NOT INTEND TO STRUGGLE TO REMAIN IN SAUDI ARABIA, BUT DOES NOT WISH TO DEPART UNDER CLOUD OF CONFIDENTIAL

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UNFOUNDED CHARGES LEST THIS AFFECT FOUNDATION'S REPUTATION THROUGHOUT AREA. WE LEAVE TO EMBASSY'S DISCRETION WHETHER TO MAKE INQUIRIES PRIOR TO TALKING TO BUNKER BUT IT OCCURS TO US THAT IF ALL MINISTRIES WERE CIRCULARIZED, THEN FOREIGN MINISTRY MAY BE ABLE TO SHED LIGHT ON MATTER.

6. THOUGH PERHAPS UNRELATED TO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, FORD FOUNDATION DID INFORM FOREIGN MINISTRY SOME TIME AGO THAT IT DID NOT WISH TO CONTINUE TO ADVISE MINISTRY ON ITS PLANS TO REORGANIZE MINISTRY AND DESIGN EXPANSION OF JIDDA FACILITIES. (FYI, FOUNDATION TELLS US REASON FOR DISENGAGEMENT WAS THAT PROJECT WAS "TOO POLITICAL".) SO FAR AS FOUNDATION IS AWARE, FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS RECEIVED THIS DECISION WITHOUT RANCOR.

7. SHOULD BUNKER ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTY OBTAINING VISA IN CAIRO WE MAY REQUEST CAIRO OR JIDDA TO FACILITATE.
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Sent Date: 31-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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